



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**FPB POLICY  
A-08-9**

**ACCESS ROADWAYS:  
MODIFIED ROADWAY SURFACE  
CFC SECTION 503**

***I. PURPOSE***

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and standards for all weather access roads for Fire-Rescue Department vehicles when modified access road materials are used.

***II. SCOPE***

This policy shall govern and include all access roads using modified road surfaces, other than the SDG-113 Standard Portland Cement Concrete or Asphalt Concrete pavements, that may be utilized by Fire-Rescue Department vehicles/apparatus to approach or stage for an emergency response to a structure, hazard, equipment, or process.

***III. DEFINITIONS***

- A. Standard Road Surface – SDG-113 pavement such as Portland Cement Concrete or Asphalt Concrete within the improved Public Rights-of-Way.
- B. Modified Road Surface – a type of material surface that provides for the structural stability and minimum coefficient of friction needed to traverse the access road over difficult topographic conditions for Fire-Rescue Department vehicle access, such as monolithic stamped concrete, interlocking concrete pavers, etc.
- C. Combined Material Road Surface – the combined use of grass with reinforced concrete pavement, interlocking block systems, or other acceptable reinforced and retained road products.

***IV. PROCEDURES***

- A. Access roads with other than standard material surfaces shall be approved by the Fire-Rescue Department's Subdivision Plan Review Officer and/or the New Construction Plan Check Supervisor in writing on an individual case-by-case basis only. The Fire-Rescue Department approval letter shall be included with all plan sets and in the record file prior to the commencement of construction.

**Fire Prevention Bureau**

Fire-Rescue Department • 1010 Second Avenue, Suite 300 • San Diego, CA 92101-4903  
Tel (619) 533-4400 Fax 544-6806

- B. The required width of the Fire-Rescue Department vehicle access road shall not be obstructed in any manner, including parked vehicles, landscaping, trees, shrubbery, or decorative objects.
- C. The requirements are applicable except as modified herein:
  - 1. The maximum grade for any Fire-Rescue Department Vehicle Access road is “five percent” (5%) or (2.25 degrees) for combination surfaces (like grass and concrete panels/blocks or pavement).
  - 2. A minimum eight-inch (8”) width concrete border shall be used to define the sides of the Fire-Rescue Department access road. This border may be level with or rise (height not to exceed 8”) above the finished road grade. The “No Parking – Fire Lane” lettering may be stamped into or painted upon the border. Signage shall comply with current Development Services Policy.
  - 3. For combined road surfaces, the support shall be adequately reinforced with structural steel to fully support the dead, live and impact loads necessary for Fire-Rescue Department vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 95,000 pounds.
  - 4. Grass within the combined access road surface shall be well maintained with a height not exceeding two-inches (2”). The road surface shall be free of over growth from adjacent areas.
  - 5. Any settlement of the road surface or other damage shall be repaired immediately.
  - 6. The Fire Marshal may require removal of the modified access road surface and the construction of an approved standard all weather road surface (concrete or asphalt) for continued violations of this modified access policy.
- D. In addition to the manufacturer’s required construction standards for the modified road surface, the following minimum base material standards shall be met. Subgrade preparation shall be done in accordance with Section 301-1 of the Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (latest adopted Edition):
  - 1. All testing shall utilize the Resistively test known as the “R” value.

2. For separate single family residential (SFR) structures up to two stories in height, the structural section shall meet the requirements of the city designated test location for taking the “R” value test. The structural section shall be based on the actual “R” value test and shall be designed for a Traffic Index (TI) equal to or greater than 5.0.
  3. For attached residential structures up to two stories in height, the structural section shall meet the requirements of the city designated test location for taking the “R” value test. The structural section shall be based on the actual “R” value test and shall be designated for a Traffic Index (TI) equal to or greater than 7.5.
  4. For all other structures greater than two stories in height, the structural section shall meet the requirements of the city designated test location for taking the “R” value test. The structural section shall be based on the actual “R” value test and shall be designated for a Traffic Index (TI) equal to or greater than 9.5.
  5. All retaining borders for the access road, regardless of width, shall be placed on the same base material as required for the road.
  6. The completed road surface and borders shall be designed to withstand a 95,000 pound gross vehicle weight plus an additional “thirty percent” (30%) impact load.
- E. Access road engineering plans shall meet or exceed Fire-Rescue Department requirements:
1. In addition to normal Development Services Permit Inspection, Fire-Rescue Department Inspection approval is required at the following stages of a project:
    - a. Subgrade materials shall be tested and verified by a certified independent soils laboratory approved by the Fire-Rescue Department and the Engineering and Capital Projects Department laboratory.
    - b. When structural steel reinforcing is in place, but prior to the placing of the concrete.
    - c. At the completion of the combined road, with the grass in place and being mowed and maintained.
  2. Fire-Rescue Department shall have final approval of the completed road.

- F. A plot plan of the project site showing all access roads, fire hydrants, fire protection systems, and building access locations, suitable for pre-fire planning (8 ½" x 11"), is required. Fire Companies will maintain up-to-date pre-fire plans of all Fire-Rescue Department vehicle access road installations.
- G. Access road maintenance will be monitored annually by the Fire Company Inspection Program and will include actual operation of Fire-Rescue Department apparatus over the access road surface to verify access road stability.

Promulgated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. 6/30/08